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OL AND SOCIAL DRAMA.

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Wide Enough for Two.

By T. S. DENISON.

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T. S. DENISON, Publisher, Chicago.

New Plays.

The Danger Signal, a drama in two acts, by T. S. Denison. Time, 1 hour, 50 minutes; 7 males, 4 females.
Wide Enough for Two, a farce, by T. S. Denison. Time, 50 minutes; 4 males, 2 females.
The Joke on Squinim, (or the black statue), 30 minutes; 4 males, 2 females. Negro farce, by W. B. Sheddan.

WIDE ENOUGH FOR TWO

A FARCE

BY T. S. DENISON,

AUTHOR OF

Odds with the Enemy; Initiating a Granger; Wanted, a Correspondent; A Family Strike; Seth Greenback; Hans Von Smash; Borrowing Trouble; Two Ghosts in White; The Pull-Back; Country Justice; The Assessor; The Sparkling Cup; Louva, the Pauper; Our Country; The School Ma'am; The Kansas Immigrants; The Irish Linen Peddler; Is the Editor In? An Only Daughter; Pets of Society; Too Much of a Good Thing; Hard Cider; Under the Laurels; The Danger Signal; Etc., Etc.

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CHARACTERS.

MR. WICKERWORK, a male crank.
HIRAM BRUSH, his level-headed partner.
FERDINAND COWLEY.
FRITZ KELLAR, a very funny Dutchman.
PUMP, an American citizen of African descent.
MISS PRUNE, a female literary crank.
SATIRA BRUSH, Hiram's daughter

Time of playing, fifty minutes.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.—*R* means right, the actor facing the audience; *L* left; *C* center.

COSTUMES, MODERN.

Fritz, ordinary German laborer, or may make up with blonde wig and whiskers, red cheeks, blouse or cardigan jacket, woolen shirt, pants very large and rusty, large, clumsy shoes, cap; should appear a large, strong man. Pump, patched clothes, holes in boots, calico shirt with gaudy scarf and glass pin, brass rings on fingers, battered stiff hat; make up not too dilapidated.

SYNOPSIS.

This farce is one scene of ludicrous fun from beginning to end. The farce opens with a very amusing dialogue between Wickerwork, the social-political crank, and Miss Prune, the literary crank. She is intent on reading him one of her "efforts," while he is equally anxious to show that every platform should be "wide enough for two." Explains his great scheme for hatching chickens by the million and instantaneous hatching by electricity. Fritz and Pump discuss American society. F. explains how he "dressed" the turkeys for the "Bold British Club." Arrival of Brush. Wickerwork explains that he has secured (for $500) the patent right for a "fattening elixir" which will enable poultry to live almost entirely on gravel and water. Enter Pump who says Fritz has baked the eggs in the hatching machine. Ferd, who calls on delicate business, gets the bounce. B. puts Fritz on guard to keep Ferd away. Pump in league with Ferd drafts Fritz into the "chain service." Ludicrous scene with lots of *business*. Ferd re-enters and mistakes Miss P. for Satira. She thinks he is Wickerwork. A "horrid mistake." W. makes another mistake. Re-enter Fritz who drags out W.; *business*. Denouement.

WIDE ENOUGH FOR TWO.

SCENE. *Sitting room in the house of Hiram Brush, plainly, but substantially furnished. Some pictures on the wall. If convenient have pictures of prize chickens or something that will represent the poultry business. Table C toward rear; sofa R rear, and chairs. Discovered as curtain rises, Mr. Wickerwork on sofa with a book, and Miss Prune seated by the table making notes in a memorandum book.*

W. (*Laying aside book.*) May I inquire what you are engaged in now, Miss Prune?

Miss P. Certainly Mr. Wickerwork! I am jotting down the incidents in a chapter of my new novel.

W. That is the novel which you *think* of writing.

Miss P. The novel which I *shall* write There is nothing hypothetical in the case. The fervor is on me! I feel the divine afflatus. (*Rises, speaks gushingly.*) Oh, Mr. Wickerwork you never felt the delicious frenzy, the divine delight of those poetic paroxysms which steal away the senses and leave their happy slave enthralled in ——.

W. I never had the disease you speak of, Miss Prune. I am a healthy man.

Miss P. Oh, Mr. Wickerwork, you are so unpoetic so—so—I *almost* said prosy.

W. Say it: That hits the case exactly. I'm plain, prosy, practical, three p's! (*Laughs.*) I'm only a business man, a member of the firm of Brush & Wickerwork, poultry, butter and egg dealers. Butter is a smooth subject, but it is not poetical, and I regret to say not always fresh. Eggs are, I admit, sometimes inspiring, but they don't keep, and chickens is—spring chickens first, last, and always.

Miss P. (*With affected banter.*) Now, Mr. Wickerwork, you know you are not always so engrossed in business. I know you sometimes shut out the prosy details of that horrid business, and locking yourself within the recesses of your soul, have sweet communings with your other self.

W. Miss Prune, I never was locked in anywhere in my life, and as for my other self—ahem—well—really, fortune has not smiled on me to that extent yet. Mademoiselle I am a bachelor, as you are aware, but your angelic smile almost tempts me—what the deuce am I saying! I am devoted to the poultry business—and to the advancement of liberal ideas! (*In his turn begins to*

grow enthused.) Yes, after the mere bread and butter making of this world that is the only noble aim in life (*grows eloquent*) to enlarge the platform of human progress; to expand ideas; to inflate conceptions; to disintegrate aggregations; to—to—to, in short, to—

Miss P. To swell—

W. No! no! Not to swell—to inflate conceptions, that's the idea. In short, every platform in this world made for one ought to be wide enough for two. Do you catch on?

Miss P. The scintillations of your beautiful idea have dazzled my mental vision, but the winged shaft itself sped so quickly over the kaleidoscopic mirage of crowding cognitions that I—

W. (*Quickly*). You've got it! (*Aside.*) Got it bad too.

Miss P. As I said—

W. (*Quickly, trying to stop her*). Yes your, idea of it is perfectly clear. Now I tell you if there ever is a millenium it will never come till everybody is *liberal.* We must all work for liberal principles. We must advocate the incipiency of equality.

Miss P. And what is more liberal than literature. Compared with that, the incipiency of equality, eventuates in infinitesimal inconsequentiality.

W. (*Aside*). Good Lord, I'm paralyzed! (*To Miss P.*) How? Which? Ah?

Miss P. Shall I repeat that statement?

W. (*Quickly, and with deprecatory gesture.*) Don't please, it's quite clear.

Miss P. Literature is the utterings of the utter.

W. (*Aside.*) It's the too-tooness of the which what. (*To Miss P.*) That's perfectly clear.

Miss P. I've an effort here you would like to hear. (*Produces enormous roll of Ms. tied with blue ribbon.*) It is entitled "The Firstlings of Experience."

W. (*Alarmed, tugs at his watch.*) Really, that is too far back; you'll have to begin with Adam. (*Aside.*) She'll bore me to death.

Miss P. No; I mean the firstlings of my *own* experience.

W. Altogether too ancient!

Miss P. Sir?

W. I beg pardon, Miss Prune. I didn't mean that. I meant —hang it I didn't mean for *you*, but for people of *mature* years. Literature has not yet marred the charms of your girlish grace and beauty.

Miss P. Mr. Wickerwork, I fear you are a flatterer.

W. Not a bit of it, I mean it.

Miss P. Man is a deceiver!

W. Yes, man in the abstract, but man in the concrete is, in short, a necessity.

Miss P. (*Smiles. Gets ready to read.*) Yes, he is very convenient to listen to essays. This is very short, only 30 pages of fool's cap.

W. (*Aside.*) Good Lord! Really, Miss Prune, I haven't time

(*tugs at his watch.*) I must see Brush. There's a big shipment of chickens to be made to-morrow, and I must look a little to the patent hatcher I bought the other day. That's a grand scheme. Can hatch 100 dozen chickens per week—spring chickens. Why, we are going to start a chicken factory that will eclipse all creation.

Miss P. (*Aside.*) He'll bore me with that for the fiftieth time. A chicken *factory*?

W. Yes, a chicken *factory*. You literary people can't always pick up us plain business men on a knotty point. I maintain it is a factory, for Webster says a factory is "a place appropriated to the making of goods." Now you can't deny that chickens are goods. All business men admit that. Now we propose to hatch the chickens by hand. (*Comes down C.*)

Miss P. By hand! well do tell. I thought it was by steam.

W. Exactly what I am doing. You see one machine will hatch 100 dozens, ten machines will hatch 1,000 dozens, one thousand machines will hatch one million dozens (*enthusiastic.*) It's a grand scheme. It's *my* scheme. I bought the patent. Brush doesn't know it yet. Brush is a good man for details, but he is too practical and afraid to venture.

Miss P. Cousin Hiram is rather practical and *so* prosy.

W. Just so! Just so! We shall revolutionize the whole chicken business. The time is coming when the old fashioned chicken will be a curiosity. Hens will never think of sitting. When a hawk is around the chicken of the future will slip into an oven for safety, just as naturally as the politician of the present slides his hand into the treasury. Yes sir'ee, Brush & Wickerwork's hatchery will pass into history as famous as George Washington's hatchet. (*Laughs.*) Fine pun that, eh?

Miss P. I declare you were destined for a literary man. Why don't you devote yourself to literature!

W. Oh I'm devoted to the advancement of liberal ideas. I shall foster the incipiency of equality; make every platform for one wide enough for two—then there is my fattening elixir which will entirely dispense with corn. That's a big thing. I bought the patent.

Enter Fritz L.

Fritz. Meester Vickerverk, must I keep dot fire purnin' all te night in dot shicken machine?

W. Yes, don't let it cool off, Fritz, or the chickens will get chilled.

F. Ya! I dink dem shickens have not colt.

Miss P. (*Aside.*) I'll draw this Dutchman out a little in my character studies for my new book. (*Gets note book ready.*) Fritz do you like poetry?

F. Boetry! Vas ish *dot*! Ist dot ine sausage?

Miss P. Pshaw no! I mean literature.

F. Oh yah! I know vat you means. Dot literature bin dem little sticks of cake all twisted oop oond baked between grease.

Miss P. (*Emphatically.*) No, I don't mean dough nuts.

F. *Dough* nuts! Vell py himmel dot peats me. I dinks nuts growed ouf dem trees. By shiminy dot bin funny. (*Laughs an awkward, broad laugh.*)

W. Miss Prune, you've floored Fritz this time.

F. Floored! Vere ist dot vloor? Mine fater's geist vat a speech dot Amerikanishe langwige bin.

Miss P. Mr. Kellar I will explain. Poetry is reading, rhyme, songs.

F. Ach I fersthays now. Boetry ist dot place vere de lines go:

"Ding—dong—ding
Ling—a—long—ling."

Miss P. (*Eagerly.*) Oh you do like it. I'll read you some.

W. (*Jumps up. Aside*) Well I'll be ——! (*Aloud.*) I must go. (*Exit R.*)

Miss P. How unappreciative Mr. Wickerwork is. And such a kind man too. His soul has yet to taste the "Firstlings of Experience." (*Suddenly.*) Fritz did you know that your soul is awakening to the first fruitions of the beautiful?

F. (*Alarmed.*) Mine Gott! Ist dot de golery?

Miss P. The cholera! What a horrid idea. I know I shall never be appreciated in this world. (*Exit R.*)

F. By colly dis ist de funniest gountry dot rolls round mit te world. Dey make shickens in an ofen oond talk apout te soul oond poetry oond dings. Vas ist dot sole? I petter know. Somedings ist de matter mit mine. Dot gal was scart oond mat. (*Starts.*) Meppe my coat or bants was dore somevere. (*Tries to look at the back of his coat. Feels the backs of his pants from the knees up to the waist.*) No, dey was all right. (*Looks puzzled.*) Vot in himmel is dot soul anytime?

Enter Pump L.

Pump. Hello, sour kraut! Wat's you tryin' to make o' yourself? Swallered anything sour?

F. Ya! Dot's it. (*Slaps his stomach.*) Dot soul of dese Americans bin into der shtomach. Vat a gweer blace. Dot was funny. (*Laughs broad laugh.*)

P. I reckon dat's about de jography of some people's souls. Say, Fritz, whah's a Dutchman's soul?

F. Well, now, Meester Pump, to tell de honest troot I nefer knowed I had one.

P. You know *sour krout*, don't you, Fritz?

F. Efery time! Say, Poomp, you have booty near got a leetle too mooch—ach—too mooch. Vas ist dot? (*Rubs his face.*)

P. Whiskers?

F. Nine. Vat you calls dot? (*Rubs face.*)

P. Face?

F. Ach vat you call it ven a man got booty near too much of it? Sheek! Dot's te wort. Poomp you booty near got a leetle schtick too mooch sheek. (*Shakes his head at Pump.*) Oh, you'll do. Dese Amerikaners bin booty shmart for hash beoples

P. *Hash people!* (*Laughs vigorously.*) What de dickens you tryin' to deliver yourself of, boss? Say't agin. An idear is drefful weak by the time it works outen a Dutchman's skull.

F. Dot's yoost like dis. Dem gals wat dakes de insides oond de outsides off de shickens dey are Americans from Cork. You bin an Amerikaner ouf Aferika, oond I bin Amerikaner ouf Deutschland.

P. Ouf where? (*Surprised.*)

F. Deutschland! (*Ditsh-land, long i Italian a.*)

P. Dutchy, is dat country in de moon?

F. Nine; dot bin not auf dem mont. Ach dese Americans bin *so* ignorant. Deutschland bin Shermany, Kaiserland.

P. Yes, I knowed ole Kiser first rate; he got six months in jail for hookin' a shovel plow. Say, Fritz, where were you born?

F. Hohenteufelsdrockendorf! (*Pronounce fast. Drill on this.*)

P. (*Starts.*) Is dat in dis world?

F. Ya; dot bin in de Riesengebirgensheinenvalder mountains. (*Pronounce fast.*)

P. (*Fumbles in his pockets.*) Hold on, Fritz; I jes got a boss receipt for lockjaw; I'll send down to the drug store right off and git a gallon.

F. Lock jaw! (*Gives his thigh a tremendous slap, seizes Pump by the hand and shakes it vigorously.*) Say, Poomp, dot's a gapital idea. Dot bin worth more as feenf oond tswansig tollars. Katrina, my wife, yoost runs dot yaw from preakfast time in te mornin' to twelf, two, o'clock next forenoon. I puys ine padlock oond, padlocks it on dot yaw at ped time; I puts de key in dem bants pocket, oond puts dem pants oonter dot billow; now dot yaw won't go off, I pet a hoondert tollars.

P. 'Spose you hand over dat twenty-five dollars for de receipt.

F. Go away! I pays no pills cash or c. o. d.; I pays a. s.

P. *A. S.!* Does dat mean at sight?

F. Dot means after satisfaction.

P. (*Sighs.*) I shan't live to see dat $25. Fritz, did you send dem turkeys up to the "Bold British Club" as I tole yer?

F. I tid yoost like you told me. Dot Pully British Club ordered a half tozen dressed turkeys for ine bank quit. He wanted dem turkeys tressed. Now I nefer see any turkeys' glothes round here, so I yoost took your atwice. I shopped off teir hets oond wrapped dem turkeys up in flags.

P. (*Laughs.*) It was a holiday you know.

F. Yoost so, oond you said efery ding would be dressed in American golers, so I wrapped dem turkeys in American golers. How was dot, Poomp?

P. All right! Won't de British Lion howl?

Enter Brush and Wickerwork L.

Brush. How is this boys! Can't you find plenty to do! (*Exit Pump suddenly R.*)

F. Ya! I dinks so.

B. Then stir around

F. Stir vat round, Meester Brush?

B. Stir yourself!

F. (*Staring.*) Stir mineself. I can't shtir mine self. I was not a kittle of noodle soup.

B. (*Impatienely.*) Oh get out! Go to work! That's what I mean.

F. Oh ya! I fershtays! (*Exit R.*)

W. What do you think of the hatching machine, Brush? (*Both coming down C.*)

B. I'm afraid it's not practical.

W. But it is. Been tried in China you know. I've a batch doing now, getting along nicely. Just think, one machine 100 dozens, ten machines 1,000 dozens. And then I think the possibilities of science are infinite. Who knows but that an increase of favorable conditions will shorten the time of hatching from three weeks to one week. (*Enthusiastic.*) Aha! I've a brilliant idea! Who knows but an electric current run through the egg may produce the live chicken instantaneously like the image pictured by the lightning's flash, *one thousand dozens per second!*

B. (*Drily.*) Roasted, basted, and ready to serve. (*W. suddenly pauses.*) Wickerwork, don't be a fool.

W. Brush, this is a little too much even from you. You haven't a spark of sentiment.

B. It isn't needed in the poultry business. When I took you for a partner I knew you had notions; in fact I thought you were a sort of crank. Notions will do when business is slack.

W. Pooh! Brush, you are level on running a business, but you are too practical. You are illiberal. You work for self. You dream of the almighty dollar by night and squeeze the eagle on the quarter all day. I'm working for humanity. If the man who makes two blades of grass grow where only one blade grew before is a benefactor why isn't he a greater benefactor who makes two chickens grow where only one grew before? Yes sir your platform is wide enough for only one; my platform is always wide enough for two.

B. So you expect eventually to get a machine which will produce two chickens instantaneously from a single egg?

W. Well, I confess I did not expect that just yet. I shall continue for a time at least to use one egg for each chicken. But who knows what science may achieve! What success have you had on your trip?

B. Splendid! (*Seated by table and turns leaves of order book.*) In the past ten days I have bought half the poultry in the State and contracted for over fifty tons of choice butter.

W. I forgot to tell you about the fattening elixir, I think.

B. Fattening elixir! What in heaven's name is that?

W. I regret that was not strictly speaking, a success. You see a chap came along with a wagon selling the stuff. Now of course if it was a good thing at all it was a good thing to *control.* So I just bought his stock and the right for the whole Northwest Got it cheap, dirt cheap. Paid him only $500 for five States and

enough of the stuff to last forever almost. You see the elixir is a liquid to be mixed with dough. The chickens plump right up on it. It saves corn, chopped meat, and all that nonsense. In a little while the chickens would need practically nothing but water and plenty of gravel.

B. How did it work!

W. I had Fritz try it on that lot of fifty choice Poland hens. But as I said, the results were not what I hoped for. But then I think the conditions were not favorable.

B. (*Impatiently.*) Well, how are the hens getting along?

W. It did not seem to agree with them. In fact about forty of the lot died next day. I think the balance may pull through.

B. (*Jumping up excitedly.*) Poison! Five hundred dollars paid for poison and my fifty Poland beauties all dead. Wickerwork, do you intend to ruin us? Are you a lunatic?

W. No sir, I'm not. Think of the compensation in the profits to be derived from the hatching machine.

B. I wish that hatching machine was —

W. There now, don't get excited.

Enter Fritz R.

B. Fritz, how is that lot of poultry getting along that I told you to fatten?

F. Dey bin gettin' along fery good.

B. Did you give them plenty of gravel as I told you?

F. Ya! I geef dem blenty of cravels oond vasser.

B. How does the corn hold out?

F. I helt no corn out.

B. Stupidity! What do you mean?

F. Vat you mean yourself?

B. Is the corn nearly done? Have you fed it all to the chickens?

F. Nine! Dot corn lasts like anytings. I yoost geef dem shickens blenty of crafel oond vasser as you tolt me, oond not much corns.

B. Confound it, you numskull, I told you to *fatten* the chickens.

F. Oond geef dem plenty of cravel.

B. Hang it you blockhead, did you think chickens could fat ten on gravel?

F. Deir helts is not pooty pad. Dey shoomp round very shpry like a feather.

B. So then there's nothing to hold them down, I suppose. Get out you idiot, before I break your head.

F. Ya! Dot's so. (*B, turns to table and commences to open some letters.*)

Enter Pump L.

P. (*Hands B. a note.*) Mister Wickerwork, what have you such a big fire under dat hatchin' machine fur?

W. Fritz, aren't you watching that machine carefully?

F. Dot machine runs itself. I yoost start one dunderin' big fire oond away she goes.

W. But the eggs need care.

P. Dat's a fac. Dey need turnin' over to git done on both sides.

W. What do you mean?

P. As I was coming past I jes took an egg outen dat machine. It wasn't bad eatin'; not cooked quite enough on one side.

W. Confound you Fritz, you've roasted them.

F. Ist dot so?

P. Dat's about it.

B. So this is the result of your hatching operations? How many eggs did you begin on?

W. Only twenty dozen.

B. Charge them up to profit and loss.

W. It's bound to work. It works in China.

B. We're not doing business in China.

W. That's what you always say. I'll go and look to that matter myself. (*Exit R.*)

B. (*Opens note.*) What is this? A note from the "Bold British Club:"

Brittania Court, Nov. 9.

MESSRS. BRUSH & WICKERWORK.

Gentlemen:—The very indifferent joke which you attempted to play upon this Club was exceeded in bad taste only by its clumsy execution. The six decapitated turkeys swathed in what you are pleased to term the "Stars and stripes" arrived duly by express and were refused. Allow me to say, sir, that the sending of the birds undressed and wrapped in such rags on this particular occasion was a gratuitous and contemptible insult which true Britons know how to resent. Yours,

JOHN BELTER,
Secretary of the B. B. C.

What does this mean?

F. Dot was an order for turkeys dressed. I yoost dressed dem in der flags left over from de Fourth of July picnic.

B. What do you mean, you blockhead, by insulting my customers?

F. De pold ploody Pritishers wanted dem turkeys dressed. De flags was about de only glothes I could dress onto dem turkeys.

B. Pump, did you know anything about this?

P. De packin' department's not in my line. I'm at de head of de slaughterin' department.

B. (*Angrily.*) Well, Fritz, I think you are the most stupid, wooden-headed Dutchman I ever saw.

F. What ist dot wooden-head?

Enter Miss Prune L.

Miss P. How glad I am to see you home, Cousin Hiram. My book is getting along nicely.

B. Botheration to your book! If I ever leave the business again in charge of Wickerwork and those other idiots may I be suffocated. They've turned everything into Bedlam and we should have to go into bankruptcy in a month. (*To Fritz and Pump.*) Go to work at once. (*Exeunt F. and P. R.*)

Miss P. You're in a bad humor, Hiram.

B. Don't I know it?

Miss P. Let me read you something to soothe you.

B. Not much you won't. I've just been martyred by one crank. I've no time for another.

Miss P. Oh Cousin Hiram!

B. Oh Cousin Prune! No thank you, not any poems to-day.

Miss P. (*Going.*) You've no sentiment. (*Exit R.*)

B. I'll get authority to start a private insane asylum. I have splendid material around me for filling it.

Enter Cowley, L.

Ferd. How d'ye do, Mr. Brush?

B. Hello! Back again, Cowley. I thought we mutually agreed some time ago that your attentions here were superfluous. Satira is not in.

Ferd. Oh I did not expect to see her—that is—ahem—just yet.

B. (*Gruffly.*) Then what yo you want?

Ferd. I want to speak to you about ——

B. (*Curtly.*) It is useless, sir.

Ferd. But I wanted to explain that ——

B. Entirely unnecessary! Shall I show you out?

Ferd. I only wanted to say that so far as Satira is concerned ——

B. Young man, I am very busy. There's the door. (*Motions to door.*)

Ferd. Really! (*Going.*)

B. Yes indeed. (*Smiles.*) Good day, sir. (*Exit F. L.*) The idea of his wanting to marry.

Enter Satira, R.

Satira. Ah, back again father?

B. I'm needed pretty badly.

S. Haven't things gone right with you?

B. Yes, all right on my trip, but all wrong at home.

S. I've kept things all right in the house, father.

B. Yes, you're a good girl, Satira. You're the only *sensible* person here, apparently. Has Ferdinand Cowley been here during my absence?

S. No; I have not seen him.

B. I have forbidden him to come here any more.

S. Why pa, what do you mean by that?

B. He wants to marry you, but he shan't. He's as poor as a church mouse.

S. But father, he is honest, intelligent, and a splendid fellow.

B. Honest poverty is at a discount these days. You shan't see him any more. (*Exit B. R.*)

S. (*Alone.*) Why should father be so harsh all of a sudden? Dear Ferd!

Enter Pump L.

P. Miss Tira, I done got a message for you.

S. For me? What is it?

P. It's from dat Mr. Cowley. He was here a minnit ago and I seed him passin' de barn. Says he, Pump, says he, tellMiss Tira I want to see her drefful bad.

S. But what shall I do, Pump? Father says Ferd shan't come any more.

P. Dat's jes what I'm prepared to arrange, Miss Tira You know Mr. Brush always goes out to oversee de packing of de orders for nex' day. He will be in de packin' house two hours. Then Mistah Cowley will call in de parlor, don't you see?

S. That is hardly right, Pump.

P. He says he has somefin drefful important to tell you.

S. (*Hesitates a moment.*) Very well, Pump. Tell him I'll be in the parlor at 8 o'clock.

P. Crackey! Dat's only 'bout half an hour yit. We'll fix dat. (*Exit L.*)

S. Pa must have finished his supper by this time. I must get Cousin Emeline and Mr. Wickerwork out of the way first. I'll arrange that. Here she comes now.

Enter Miss P. R.

S. Cousin Emeline, you and Mr. Wickerwork are specially invited to the Literary sociable, to-night at eight sharp.

Miss P. Thank you, if Mr. Wickerwork will go I should be delighted.

S. The programme is very attractive. Don't miss it. Will you go?

Miss P. Literature is the only thing that is noble and ennobling. I must go by all means. (*Exit S. R.*) Stay, why should I waste my time and tire my genius among that unappreciative lot of giddy things. I'll not. Mr. Wickerwork and I can have such a delightful visit all alone.

Enter Brush and Fritz L.

B. Oh you here Cousin Prune?

Miss P. Yes, Hiram. How unkind you were awhile ago. Now aren't you in a better humor, cousin dear?

B. No, thank you. I'll not take any poetry just now.

Miss P. (*Pettishly.*) I wasn't thinking of poetry. (*Exit R.*) Fritz, you've made a bad mess of things. Really it seems impossible to get an idea through your pate.

F. Pate! Pate! Vas ist dot? Ist dot ine masheen?

B. (*Laughs.*) Yes, and an uncommonly stupid one. Look here Fritz, you have *muscle*?

F. Ya! Tswi muscles. (*Holds up both arms.*)

B. All right! Listen! There's a youg fellow comes round here sometimes to see my daughter. I told him not to come.

If he comes while I'm in the packing house carry him out to the gate and tell him to travel.

F. Vich way moost he dravel?

B. No difference which way so he's lively about it. Don't hurt him.

F. Ya, I handles eem like a paby yoost dis way. (*Business of carrying a baby.*) Oh I dakes him so careful as one dree-year-olt shpring shicken. I yoost doomp him ofer dot fence into dot gutter yoost so. (*Motion of throwing Brush over the fence.*)

B. (*Hastily.*) No, you needn't demonstrate it now. Keep your eye peeled.

F. Mine Gott! Peel mine eye!

B. (*Laughs.*) Look out!

F. Py himmel! I looked out one night watchin' dot wassermelon patch by dot gun till I got ine cough bigger as a graveyard. I yoost looks in to-night.

B. All right! *Keep your bearings.* (*Exit B. L.*)

F. (*Musing paces stage.*) Keep my parings! vat was dot? Oh dis Americanische langwige bin ine schwindle. Instead of havin' five or six worts for one ding dey have five or six dings for one wort. Mine parings! Vat in himmel is dot? Now I got him! (*Gives his thigh a tremendous slap.*) Ven I pulls dem feathers fone dem shickens I makes dem *bare.* So I takes deir parings. I yoost dakes off mine coat, oond mine vest, oond mine —— no I moost not dake so much bearings. I dake off mine coat so. (*Pulls off coat.*) I rolls oop by dem sleeves so. (*Rolls up sleeves.*) Now I got dem bearings oond I bin ready for dot business.

Enter Miss P. R.

Miss P. (*Screams.*) I declare that man is mad. (*About to faint. Fritz grabs her in his arms.*)

F. Vas you sick, Missus Prunes?

Miss P. (*Suddenly recovering gives him a vigorous push.*) You horrid man! Put on that coat! (*Fritz stands staring.*) Put on that coat I say! (*Stamps her foot. Fritz, excited, has no time to unroll his shirt sleeves. Tries to get his coat on, but the sleeves stick. She laughs. Practice this well.*)

F. Now dot coat was on.

Miss P. (*Disdainfully.*) How prosy and commonplace the Germans are! No poetry in their souls.

F. (*Hastily.*) Please don't shpeak about dot boetry oond dot soul. We'll shpeak apout someding else. Do you like sauer kraut?

Miss P. (*Scornfully.*) The idea!

F. Nine? Oond bock beer, oond limburger, sheese oond dem goot dings? (*Smacks his lips.*)

Miss P. How disgusting! (*Exit R.*)

F. Now I yoost dakes dem parings again. (*Takes off coat and rolls up sleeves.*)

Enter Pump L.

P. (*Aside.*) There's old sour crout. (*To Fritz.*) Fritz, you ought to be in de packin' house 'bout dis time 'cordin' to my notion of jography and flosofy.

F. (*Makes a "snoot" at him.*) I got a petter yob in dis parlor. Mr. Prush told me to take my parings here.

P. Take what?

F. My parings! I was on guard. (*They come down C.*)

P. Oh 'zactly so, I see!

F. Say, Poomp, my throat bin awful dry. You yoost dake my parings wile I gets five, secks eggs by dem kitchen to suck.

P. All right! (*Exit F. R.*) So de ole man is onto our little plan, an' Germany is keepin' guard. I'll jes show folks dat de African American's nuff sight better'n de Dutch American. Less 'ee! (*Muses.*) I'll try de police scheme and fix Ferd up in dat old coat Cousin Joe used to wear onto de Metropolitan Police down to Washington City. (*Re-enter Fritz from kitchen R with several raw eggs. puts one in each pants' pocket and proceeds to suck one, turning his head far back and evincing great relish.*)

F. Ach, dot ist good! (*To Pump.*) Have one?

P. No; Americans don't like low foreign habits.

F. Americans! Yoost wait till I bin in dis gountry tswi, tree, four, shenerations oond I bin ine Amerikaner too.

P. You'll not be here that long till you'll be in the *service.*

F. *Serfice*! Moost ine man go into dair army in dis gountry if he don't want to?

P. Oh it's not exactly the army. Native Americans are exempt. Dey calls it de *chain service.* Dey sometimes put a ball to a man's leg with a chain. Dey don't do dat wid de Dutch kase dey don't know enough to run away.

F. What moost de men do?

P. Shovel gravel on de street.

F. Ist dot all?

P. Oh dah's plenty 'nough of dat. An Irishman serves one year an' a Dutchman two. Dey's apt to call for you mos' any time. (*Exit L.*)

F. Dot shain serfice ist a funny serfice. Vat a gountry dis Amerika bin. Vat a grand humpug it all pin. Scratchin' cravel by der shtreet. Ah I bin tired. (*Drops into an easy chair.*) I yoost dakes my parings here. (*Produces another egg and business of sucking it with great gusto.*) I won't go on dot shain serfice. I dells dem I got ine frow oond ten shilders down by New York.

Enter Ferd L disguised as police officer.

Ferd. (*Sternly.*) Are you Fritz Kellar?

F. Ya! Dot bin me. (*Rises.*)

Ferd. I am an American officer on the chain service. You have been drafted into the service to-day and must report at once.

F. Meester offitsier, I yoost can't go. Der serfice kills me quick. I got ine dretful plumbago in mine back (*business of*

lame back) oond I got night schweats oond de golory efery night, oond dot left hip bin puckered all oop mit rheumatisms like a shtick of tried peef.

Ferd. Come! Come! None of this shamming. I see nothing the matter with that hip. (*Slaps him on the hip and breaks egg in pants' pocket.*)

F. (*Business of limping round stage, groans.*) Oh! oh! how dot hurts! (*Aside.*) Proke dot egg!

Ferd. (*Slaps him on the other thigh and breaks another egg.*) Come along I say!

F. Dair tifel, how dot schmarts me! (*Aside.*) Proke dot left egg! (*Ludicrous business of feeling his pockets for the broken egg and trying to limp on both legs. Suddenly thinks of his wife.*) Say Meester, I yoost can't go by dot shain serfice. I got a wife oond sixteen shilders by New York.

Ferd. (*Laughs.*) Oh come along. I've no time to waste You're a good one. (*Slaps Fritz on the shoulder.*)

F. I was a goot one, eh! Oond you sometimes slaps a goot one on te shoulter, eh?

Ferd. Sometimes! Not always.

F. Well Meester, you was a goot one too may pe. (*Gives Ferd a tremendous slap on the shoulder.*) Oh you was a goot one. (*Tries to thump Ferd again, latter evades him.*)

Ferd. There! That will do. Now come.

F. All right, I was comin'. Say Meester Offitsier, have you any fire at dot recruitin' house?

Ferd. (*Going.*) Plenty of it. We'll keep you warm enough.

F. (*Aside.*) Dem eggs was travelin' down mit my toes. If fire is blenty I yoost gets baked into an omelet. (*Exeunt L.*)

Enter Miss P. R.

Miss P. At last that horrid Dutchman has gone. Why should he be poking around in the sitting room? Now I wonder if dear Mr. Wickerwork will delay wasting his time with that dreadful hatching machine? (*Sentimental.*) Oh he's so noble and intellectual. What a pity he did not engage in literary pursuits. (*Muses.*) Perhaps if he had I should not have liked him half so well. Love goes by contrast. I am literary and poetic; he is intellectual and liberal. He is willing to devote himself to the good of mankind. And then he is *so practical.* What a sublime conception that of hatching by electricity in a few seconds chickens enough to feed a whole nation! I hear his steps. I will pretend I did not expect him. (*Seats herself on sofa with her back to L. Enter Ferd L.*)

Ferd. I got rid of that Dutchman by leaving him in a coal office awaiting orders. It will not do for Mr. Brush to see so much light in the parlor. I'll turn it down a little. (*Turns down light.*) Oh there the dear girl is. (*Seats himself beside Miss Prune.*) Have you no welcome for me?

Miss P. (*In muffled voice.*) I thought you had forgotten me.

Ferd. Forgotten you! How could you think me so cruel?

(*Fervidly.*) No I'll never, *never*, forget you. my darling! (*In his excitement does not notice her voice.*)

Miss P. Darling! Dear fellow!

Ferd. (*Puts his arm round her.*) My own dearest darling! My lily, my birdie!

Miss P. (*Gushingly.*) You have sentiment! Oh I'm so glad you have sentiment. I was afraid you were too practical. (*Drops her head on his shoulder still with face averted.*)

Ferd. Oh I've sentiment enough, my little pixy wixy. My dear little girl.

Miss P. Dear *little* girl. What a delicate sentiment!

Ferd. And the truth, too. (*Turns her head to kiss her.*)

Miss P. Oh Mr. Wickerwork!

Ferd. (*Bouncing up.*) Miss Prune! Holy Moses!

Miss P. Ferdinand Cowley! Sir, how dare you take such liberties?

Ferd. So you thought I was old Wickerwork! (*With disgust.*) Ugh! What a fool I've been.

Miss P. Oh dear! I shall faint!

Ferd. Don't for Heaven's sake! I want to faint myself.

Miss P. Sir! Mr. Cowley, you are a brute. (*Exits hastily R.*)

Ferd. And a fool besides! Confound me, what a dunce I've made of myself, hugging that old thing and nearly kissed her. Pah!

Enter Pump hastily L.

Pump. Golly, Mistah Cowley, you've got to git quick. Mistah Brush is done comin' in dis way right off.

Ferd. Where is he?

P. At de front door. Go de back way. (*Exits L.*)

F. Here's a fix. I'll hide in this room till the gale passes. (*Exit F. hastily R.*)

Enter Satira L.

Satira. I wonder why Ferd doesn't come? I've watched for him till I'm tired. Dear me, why couldn't he be more prompt? Pa is liable to come in any moment. Hark, I hear him now.

Enter W. L.

S. (*Softly.*) At last you've come. (*Goes to side as if to look off so that W. does not recognize her.*)

W. Yes, my dear girl, I'm here. Did I keep you waiting?

S. Oh that's nothing. I am willing to wait for you. (*Turns toward table.*)

W. (*Approaching.*) What a dear girl.

S. We must not be here long. (*Turns up lamp. Screams.*) Oh Mr. Wickerwork!

W. (*Surprised.*) The dickens! Oho! So you thought it was some one else?

S. (*Imitating.*) Oho! So *you* thought it was some one else?

W. I can guess who.

S. I can guess who.

W. Well we're both mistaken. (*Laughs.*) So you see Miss Satira discretion is the better part of—of—

S. Common sense.

W. Just so.

S. Very well, say nothing and I'll not. (*Aside.*) I wish he would go. He'll spoil everything.

W. Mum is the word. Now we will, if you please, change the subject. 'Tira, you ought to read more, to keep yourself informed regarding the advancement of the world, to have ideas, in short, to be liberal. Is your platform wide enough for two?

S. Yes, if I select the second. Mr. Wickerwork, let's talk of something else. I don't understand politics, and progress, and liberalism, and all that. (*Aside.*) I wish he'd go.

W. (*Aside.*) She shows no disposition to go. (*To Satira.*) Now you ought to learn those things, they are necessary for women, I assure you. I'll give you your first lesson now. (*Begins in eloquent style.*) In the beginning God created all men free and equal. He never intended that one man should be the slave of another, nor was it his divine plan that one man should be worth a million while his neighbors toiled ten hours a day for bread and water.

S. That is very true. No one denies it.

W. Oh but some do deny it. I could soon convince you of that. (*S. quietly slips out R unobserved.*) But progress is irresistible; the world is bound to improve until the glorious doctrine of liberty, fraternity and equality (*Enter Miss P. R*) sit down together to enjoy the fruits of triumphant victory.

Miss P. I declare, Mr. Wickerworth, you are an orator. Oh if you were only literary!

W. Here at last are you! I thought you wanted to finish writing that book before you came.

Miss P. How cruel you are. There's nothing cruel in literature.

W. Hang literature! Let's talk of love.

Miss P. Oh Mr. Wickerwork!

W. I've had enough of business and of literature. (*They are seated on sofa.*) As I look down the dim vista of the future——

Miss P. (*Tapping him playfully.*) That's poetical!

W. No it isn't. It's business. As I look into aforesaid vista I can picture a snug little home with domestic comforts. (*Miss P. sighs, W. starts.*) Ah you're not indisposed are you Miss Prune? (*Edges closer.*)

Miss P. No, I am disposed to think favorably—no I don't mean that. Oh dear!

W. Exactly! I understand.

Miss P. I was picturing an idyl.

W. An idol! Are you an idolater?

Miss P. No, I mean an *idyl*, a poem you know, like Mr. Tennyson's. Mr. Wickerwork, have you ever thought what influence we literary people wield? Why, there was a whole thou-

sand of my last book sold. Just think of one thousand missionaries all going forth on their mission to the world.

W. All right! Never mind the missionaries. They suggest collections. Miss Prune, whom do you suppose I pictured in that little cottage?

Miss P. (*Coyly.*) I never could guess.

W. (*Aside.*) Wickerwork you're in for it. I'll tell you. Ahem —oh—it was a blooming young girl.

Miss P. (*Withdrawing.*) Do you intend to insult me?

W. Hang it all, I meant you.

Miss P. Oh, I ought to have recognized the picture at once. Mr. Wickerwork, you know I'm wedded to literature.

W. And I'm wedded to business. (*A pause.*) What are you thinking about, Miss Prune?

Miss P. I was thinking we might both get divorces.

W. We'll do better than that. (*Confidentially.*) We'll commit bigamy—of course in a literary sense. Is it settled?

Miss P. Jacob!

W. Emeline! (*W. is about to clasp Miss P. in his arms when enter suddenly L Fritz.*)

Fritz. I vas to dake my pearings mit dot fellow. Shtop dot puisness! (*Takes W. by the back of the neck and coat tails and "snakes" him out L, W. struggling and crying, let go, you villain, etc.*)

Miss P. Oh what is the matter! That dreadful Dutchman will kill poor Jacob. Help! Help! (*Tries to faint on sofa. Re-enter Fritz L.*)

F. I don'd need no help. (*Sits on sofa beside Miss P.*) Vake up! Dot leetle show was ofer.

Miss P. (*Jumping up.*) You wicked man, what have you done with Jacob?

F. He won't geef you no droubles any more. I wish I coot see dot shain serfice man. I bin goin' to poolfrize dot feller like one big shtick of sausage. (*Rolls his hands as if pulverizing something.*)

Miss P. Are you mad?

F. Ya! I was dunderin' mat.

Enter Ferd R.

Ferd. I thought I heard a noise. Ah —

F. Dot shain man! Say Meester you'll hear a noise bigger as dunder.

Ferd. Dutchy, you're insolent.

F. Insolvent! (*Muses.*) Vas ist dot? Shpose I was insolvent! I can lick mit any man vat says he ist ine offitsier ven he ist not ine offitsier.

Miss P. Please, Mr. Cowley, get him out.

Ferd. Come Fritz, let's make friends.

F. I makes not anydings.

Ferd. (*Shoves him toward the door L.*) Why don't you go?

F. Vy don't you go mit yourself? You was dot feller I was to dake my pearings on. (*Takes Ferd by the arm and leads him to-*

ward the door L. while latter is vigorously pounding Fritz, who seems to relish it.) I'll give him a few parings. *(Shoves Ferd to the door L, and gives him a kick with the flat of his foot which sends him flying.)* Dot was shplendid fun. Meppe he don't work by dair shain serfice any more.

Brush, Satira, W., and Pump enter L.

Brush. Fritz, that's right, throw him out!

S. Pa, it's a downright shame!

W. And he dragged me out, too. Really, Brush, this is too much.

B. All a mistake, Wickerwork. By the way, what were you doing when he dragged you out?

W. Ahem—well really—that's another matter. *(Re-enter Ferd.)*

B. Now Mr. Cowley, will you please take your departure at once, and never set foot in this house again?

Ferd. No sir!

B. What!

Ferd. I've something to say first. You wouldn't let me say it awhile ago, but I will not be put off now. By the sudden demise of my aunt I have now abundant means to start in business.

B. Well, that sounds a little better.

Ferd. And Satira loves me Isn't that so, Tira?

S. *(Taking place by his side.)* Yes, Ferd.

B. All right, we will talk it over. But how did you get in here, anyway?

Fritz. Ach, dot Poomp!

B. Oh, Pump! I begin to see. An auxiliary, eh?

P. I axes youh pardon, Mr. Brush, case I was workin' in a good cause.

Fritz. *(Aside.)* Py shiminy! I gets even mit dot African American. *(Calls Pump aside; L).* Oh you was a goot one! *(Gives P. a tremendous thump. Laughs.)*

P. What you about dah?

F. *(Gives him another thump.)* You was a goot one *(Laughs.)*

P. Dat's enough. My neck's broken and my back's off de hinges, an' half my ribs discommoded.

B. Fritz, what do you mean?

Fritz. Oh in dis gountry, ven you sees a schmart feller, you yoost shlaps him ouf te shoulter oond say he was a goot one. Dot Mr. Cowley, he was a goot one. *(Makes motion to thump Ferd on the shoulder. Latter dodges.)*

Ferd. I'll take your word for it, Fritz.

Miss P. *(Pulling W. by the sleeve.)* Jacob, keep away from that man; he'll kill some one yet.

W. No danger my dear. He's harmless.

Ferd. Have we your consent, then, Mr. Brush?

B. I think I'll say yes.

W. Partner, I've decided on an important step. Miss Prune, here, is about to become Mrs. Wickerwork.

B. Indeed! Accept my congratulations.

W. (*Eloquent.*) Thank you sir! Thank you all! This occasion is the only *great* one of my life. Matrimony is the next thing to the millennium. It is better than any fattening elixir or patent right. Matrimony is liberal; matrimony is progressive; in short, matrimony is the only platform WIDE ENOUGH FOR TWO.

SITUATIONS.

C

Brush, Satira, Ferd.

R
Miss P., W.

L
Fritz, Pump.

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